

PC MADNESS

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The past decade has given rise to the amusement of creating politically-correct definitions. Merriam-Webster researchers have found the term "politically correct" in H.V. Morton's book *In The Steps of Saint Paul*, (1936). It was reported that the term was used in a 1793 US Supreme Court decision.

Musician Frank Zappa went so far as to call political correctness "the language of cowardice". PC has been compared to McCarthyism in that it evokes fear of being quietly blacklisted for not conforming to the doctrine. One could refer to it as a form of semantic oppression. Many express concern regarding its effect on the esthetics of our language.

Political correctness is a world of many victims and few guilty parties. Its attempt at tolerance ("acceptance" might be a better word) and undoing negative stereotyping is often criticized for having the opposite effect. "Homophobia" could be replaced by a less antagonistic term for what we could call "heterosexism". Many who endorse PC are themselves guilty of making stereotypographical errors.

alive: temporarily metabolically abled
 clumsy: uniquely coordinated
 dead: living impaired
 dishonest: ethically disoriented
 drunk: sobriety deprived
 elderly: chronologically experienced, chronologically gifted
 fail: achieve a deficiency
 heavy: gravitationally compromised
 ignorant: knowledge-based nonpossessor
 lazy: motivationally deficient
 panhandler: unaffiliated applicant for private-sector funding
 pregnant: parasitically oppressed
 rude: cordiality impaired
 spendthrift: negative saver
 stoned: chemically inconvenienced
 vagrant: nonspecifically destinationed individual
 white: melanin deficient
 worst: least best (carried over from Orwell's 1984 doublespeak)
 wrong: differently logical

According to Susan Fischer (in a letter to the online magazine *The Linguist*, Nov 4 1994), a CBS censor in 1957 forced satirist Stan Freberg to change the title of the song "Old Man River" to "Elderly Man River"!